(b) whether it is also a fact that a large number of rerolling mills who depend primarily on furnace oil for running their units would suffer thoroughly because of the exorbitant cost involved; and

(c) Whether Government are contemplating any other steps to help in the suffering of rolling mills on account of this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) The oil marketing PSUs had been advised by the Ministry to stop inter-State supply of all petroleum products by road across State borders as sales tax evasion was being allegedly resorted to by some customers.

The Ministry and the oil companies received representations from different industries, industrial/commercial confederations/associations and some Departments of Governament of India. The Government have considered the representations and the oil marketing PSUs have been advised to restore Inter-State road supplies to all genuine customers which *inter-alia* include Export Oriented Units, customers in Union Territories where oil companies have no storage facilities and such customers are supplied from the nearest depot in adjoining States. In addition Government consumers like Railways, Defence and Public Sector Undertaking like Steel, Coal, Power etc. as well as Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/ Agreement customers have been exempted from the above restrictions.

Fire in Mathura Refinery

878. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major fire broke out in the oil water sewage system of the Mathrura Refinery recently;

(b) if so, the total loss suffered by the refinery as a result thereof;

(c) whether Government have since ascertained the cause of the incident: and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to check recurrence of such incidents in future?

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) Yes, Sir. A fire took place in the flare area of Mathura Refinery on 22.5.2000.

(b) Loss incurred due to the fire is Rs. 24.4 lakhs including cost of fire fighting materials amounting to Rs. 21.4 lakhs. There was no injury to any personnel due to this fire.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. There was some carry over/spillage of Naptha/FCC gasoline from sour water unit to flare area during unit startup activities which apparently caught fire.

All fire incidents are investigated by multi-disciplinary teams and remedial measures as recommended are implemented in a time bound manner.

Adequate measures are adopted for safety of the plant and operating personnel as per the prescribed Oil Industry Safety Directorate (OISD) standards.

Ban on Inter-State Movement of Petro-Products

879. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have imposed ban on Inter-State movement of petro-products by the natural oil marketing companies;

(b) if so, the reasons for discrimination when private companies are facing no such restrictions; and

(c) the steps taken to allow movements of products by roads as all the States and the Union Territories do not have refineries or depots?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) The oil marketing PSUs had been advised by the Ministry to stop inter-State supply of all petroleum products by road across State borders as sales tax evasion was being allegedly resorted to by some customers.

The Ministry and the oil companies received representations from different industries, industrial/commercial confederations/association and some Departments of Government of India. The Government have considered the representations and the oil marketing PSUs have been advised to restore Inter-State road supplies to all genuine customers which *inter-alia* include Export Oriented Units, Customers in Union Territories where oil companies have no